

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13

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FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6997

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

EC BRUSSELS 293

USMISSION NATO

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USCINCEUR

USDOCOSOUTH

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE VALLETTA 1103

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT

SUBJ: MINTOFF APPOINTS HIS NEW CABINET

REF: VALLETTA 1095, 1087

1. WASTING LITTLE TIME, AND NOT EVEN WAITING FOR THE
SELECTION OF THE TEN SUBSTITUTE CANDIDATES NEEDED TO FILL
THE REMAINING SEATS IN THE FORTHCOMING PARLIAMENT
(VALLETTA 1087), PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF ANNOUNCED HIS
NEW CABINET ON SEPTEMBER 24. THERE ARE ONLY TWO NEW
FACES IN THE CABINET, WHO REPLACE ONE MINISTER WHO DID
NOT CONTEST THE ELECTION AND ANOTHER WHO FAILED TO BE
RE-ELECTED. HOWEVER, MINTOFF HAS SHUFFLED SEVERAL OF THE
PORTFOLIOS AND CREATED A NUMBER OF NEW TITLES.

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2. THE NEW CABINET IS AS FOLLOWS:

- (A) PRIME MINISTER/FOREIGN MINISTER/MINISTER OF INTERIOR - DOM MINTOFF (INTERIOR IS A NEW TITLE, BUT THE FUNCTIONS PREVIOUSLY HAVE BEEN CARRIED OUT BY MINTOFF)
- (B) MINISTER OF JUSTICE, LANDS, HOUSING AND PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS - ANTON BUTTIGIEG (HOUSING AND LANDS PREVIOUSLY WAS A SEPARATE MINISTRY)
- (C) MINISTER OF LABOR, WELFARE AND CULTURE - AGATHA BARBARA (CULTURE PREVIOUSLY WAS PART OF ANOTHER MINISTRY)
- (D) MINISTER OF FINANCE, CUSTOMS AND PEOPLE'S FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS - JOSEPH ABELA (PEOPLE'S FINANCIAL INVESTMENTS IS A NEW TITLE)
- (E) MINISTER OF TOURISM - DANIEL PISCOPO (TOURISM PREVIOUSLY WAS PART OF ANOTHER MINISTRY)
- (F) MINISTER OF WORKS AND SPORTS - LARRY SANT (SPORTS IS A NEW TITLE)
- (G) MINISTER OF EDUCATION - JOSEPH CASSAR (FORMERLY COMBINED WITH CULTURE)
- (H) MINISTER OF DEVELOPMENT, ENERGY, PORTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS - WISTIN ABELA (ENERGY, PORTS AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS PREVIOUSLY WERE PARTS OF OTHER MINISTRIES)
- (I) MINISTER OF PARASTATAL AND PEOPLE'S INDUSTRIES - FREDDEI MISCALLEF (A NEW MINISTRY WHOSE FUNCTIONS PREVIOUSLY WERE ASSIGNED TO OTHER MINISTRIES)
- (J) MINISTER OF TRADE - PATRICK HOLLAND (FORMERLY COMBINED WITH INDUSTRY AND TOURISM)
- (K) MINISTER OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENT - VINCENT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
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MORAN (ENVIRONMENT IS A NEW TITLE, AND MORAN IS ONE OF THE TWO NEW MEMBERS OF THE CABINET)
- (L) MINISTER OF INDUSTRY, FISHERIES AND AGRICULTURE- DANNY CREMONA (COMBING FUNCTIONS PREVIOUSLY ASSIGNED TO TWO MINISTRIES, WITH CREMONA BEING THE OTHER NEW MEMBER OF THE CABINET).

3. COMMENT: THIS COULD BE ONLY AN INTERIM CABINET WITH MINTOFF PLANNING DIFFERENT ASSIGNMENTS IN THE FUTURE. ANTON BUTTIGIEG, WHO ALSO SERVES AS "DEPUTY PRIME MINISTER" AND DEPUTY LEADER OF THE LABOR PARTY, HAS BEEN RECONFIRMED IN THE LATTER POSITION ONLY FOR THREE MONTHS, COMPARED WITH MINTOFF'S RE-ELECTION AS PARTY LEADER FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS. BUTTIGIEG'S POSITION IN THE PARTY (OR THE CABINET) COULD, THEREFORE, BE DUE FOR A CHANGE BY THE END OF THE YEAR. FURTHERMORE, THE PRESIDENT, SIR ANTHONY MAMO, IS EXPECTED TO RETIRE WITHIN A FEW MONTHS, WHICH COULD ALSO HAVE A MUSICAL CHAIRS EFFECT ON ONE OR ANOTHER OF THE SENIOR MALTA LABOR PARTY AND PARLIAMENTARY OFFICIALS. ALSO THE POSITION OF SPEAKER OF THE NEW HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES HAS YET TO BE FILLED BY MINTOFF WHO, FIVE YEARS AGO, REWARDED A DEFEATED LABOR PARLIAMENTARIAN WITH THAT JOB. IN THE AREA OF PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE BETWEEN THE LABORITES AND THE NATIONALISTS, MINTOFF'S BLATANT ADOPTION OF SUCH PROVOCATIVE TERMS AS "PEOPLE'S INDUSTRIES" AND "PEOPLE'S INVESTMENTS" CERTAINLY WILL CAUSE SERIOUS CONCERN AMONG CONSERVATIVE CIRCLES IN MALTA, CIRCLES WHICH ALREADY ARE ALARMED OVER MINTOFF'S "NEIGHBORHOOD COMMITTEES" (VALLETTA 1095). AND THAT IS DOUBTLESS EXACTLY WHY MINTOFF HAS WAVED THESE RED FLAGS AT THE NATIONALIST BULL. END COMMENT. SMITH

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